



Brownfields 2009 Cleanup Grant Fact Sheet

Ypsilanti, MI

EPA Brownfields Program

EPA's Brownfields Program empowers states, communities, and other stakeholders to work together to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. A brownfield site is real property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant. In 2002, the Small Business Liability Relief and Brownfields Revitalization Act was passed to help states and communities around the country cleanup and revitalize brownfields sites. Under this law, EPA provides financial assistance to eligible applicants through four competitive grant programs: assessment grants, revolving loan fund grants, cleanup grants, and job training grants. Additionally, funding support is provided to state and tribal response programs through a separate mechanism.

Community Description

The City of Ypsilanti was selected to receive three brownfields cleanup grants. Located 30 miles west of Detroit, Ypsilanti (population 21,764) was founded in 1825. During the 19th and 20th centuries, it was the largest industrial center in southeast Michigan outside the Detroit metropolitan area. Large manufacturing plants were built in and near the city, but today, only one remains active. Abandoned plants have created more than 150 acres of large brownfields. Past manufacturing and industrial operations were chemical-intensive, involving metal formation, welding, and finishing. Migration of contaminants into the Huron River and the threat of contaminated groundwater are major concerns for the river and downstream residents. The city's population has declined 5.4 percent since 2000, almost 17 percent of families live in poverty, and 39 percent of residents are minorities. When the target sites are cleaned up, they are expected to be a critical factor in moving forward with the Water Street Project, a 38-acre site on the Huron River. Redevelopment plans for the project include housing, retail use, and office space. This redevelopment is expected to increase economic activity in the downtown district, create jobs, and generate additional tax revenues.

Cleanup Grants

\$600,000 for hazardous substances

EPA has selected the City of Ypsilanti for three brownfields cleanup grants. Hazardous substances grant funds will be used to clean up the Water Street Redevelopment Project Areas of Concern #1, #2, and #5. The properties are located at 20 East Michigan Avenue; 34, 38, and 40 East Michigan Avenue and 14 South River Street; and 103 South River Street, respectively. The sites have a long history of industrial and commercial uses, including truck and automotive parts manufacturing, automobile repair, and newspaper printing. Soils and groundwater are contaminated with a variety of hazardous substances, including trichloroethene, arsenic, PCBs, and mercury. Grant funds from all three grants also will be used to conduct community engagement activities.

Contacts

For further information, including specific grant contacts, additional grant information, brownfields news and events, and publications and links, visit the EPA Brownfields Web site (<http://www.epa.gov/brownfields>).

EPA Region 5 Brownfields Team
(312) 886-7576

EPA Region 5 Brownfields Web site
(<http://www.epa.gov/R5Brownfields>)

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(734) 483-1810

The information presented in this fact sheet comes from the grant proposal; EPA cannot attest to the accuracy of this information. The cooperative agreement for the grant has not yet been negotiated. Therefore, activities described in this fact sheet are subject to change.